

DRC PEOPLE

- Since 1998 4 million people have died from famine, conflict violence, disease.
- Homes, schools, markets, hospitals have been looted and destroyed.
- 1,200 people die daily from epidemics and conflicts.
- Estimated 8,000 children remain as child soldiers.
- 3 million people have been injured by land mines and other unexploded munitions.
- Literacy: 65.5%. 26.9 gross school enrollment ratio. 4.4 million children not in school.
- 1.1 million with HIV; 5% of population.
- 31% of children under 5 are underweight.
- Life expectancy 44.
- Births per woman: 6.7. High maternal mortality rate.
- Infant mortality rate 129 per 1,000.
- 16% of children under 5 have severe malnutrition.
- Measles immunization rate ('04) 64%.
- 42% urban access to sanitation. 54% don't have access to clean water. Only 37% of population have phone access.
- 80% of population live on less than \$1 a day.

DRC

- One-fourth size of USA.
- Numerous natural resources: cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, petroleum, industrial & gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, coltan, uranium, coal, hydropower, natural gas, timber.
- Natural hazards: flooding, droughts, volcanic activity.

- Environmental issues: poaching threatens wildlife populations; water pollution; refugees responsible for significant deforestation; soil erosion; mineral mining causing environmental damage.

DRC PROBLEMS

- Banking system vulnerable to money laundering due to corruption and lack of supervision.
- Large number of refugees from surrounding countries.
- Continued fighting between rebel forces, tribal forces and militia forces.
- Minimal phone service or other technological services.
- External debt (2003) 10.6 billion; Aid 2.2 billion (2003). 9% inflation rate

Why the DRC is important :

Anneke Van Woudenberg, a senior researcher at Human Rights Watch:

"If you want peace in Africa, then you need to deal with the biggest country right at its heart."

Coltan: The Black Gold of the DR Congo WARNING

This cellphone was created with a rare material from the Congo, mined by slave and child labor; the proceeds of which fund war and your purchase of this product may cause the extinction of the endangered Lowland Mountain Gorilla.

DO YOU STILL WANT TO MAKE YOUR PURCHASE?

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE USES OF COLTAN IN MODERN SOCIETY?

- cutting tools
- Camera lenses
- X-ray film
- Ink jet printers
- hearing aids
- pacemakers
- airbag protection systems
- ignition and motor control modules, GPS, ABS systems in automobiles
- laptop computers
- cellular phones
- game consoles such as play station, xbox and nintendo
- video cameras
- digital still cameras
- Chemical process equipment
- Prosthetic devices for humans – hips, plates in the skull
- Suture clips
- High temperature furnace parts.

NO CHILD SHOULD BE DIGGING IN THE MUD



SO ANOTHER CAN BE ENTERTAINED.

ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE FROM COLTAN MINING

- Forest clearance and use of timber and poles to build camps to accommodate workers;
- Forest clearance to expose substrate for mining;
- Pollution of streams by silt from washing process;
- Erosion of unprotected earth during rains leading to land-slips;
- Cutting of firewood for warmth and cooking in camps;
- Hunting of animals for bushmeat to feed miners and camp followers;
- Animals maimed or dying after escaping from snares;
- De-barking trees to make panning trays for washing coltan;
- Cutting of lianas to make carrying baskets for coltan;
- Disturbance of animals due to large number of people resident in and moving through forest;
- Silting up of streams likely to kill invertebrates and reduce photosynthesis in aquatic plants;
- Reduced productivity of fish stocks in lakes and rivers affected by silt pollution;
- Ecological changes due to loss of keystone species such as elephants and apes.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Recycle Cellphones and other electronics
- Ask if the product you are buying is “gorilla safe” and “blood free”.
- Write to you Senators and ask them to support the **Conflict Coltan and Cassiterite Act**, legislation which would require certification of minerals imported from the Democratic Republic of Congo. It was introduced by U.S. Senators Sam Brownback (R-KS) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) on May 23, 2008.

“ Unfortunately, the mining of Congo's coltan continues to fund the conflict which encompasses child-labor, human-trafficking, child soldiers, rape and sexual violence, and the general devastation of the Congolese people.”

U.S. Senator Sam Brownback

**Support Congolese organizations such as:
The Shalupe Foundation,
Street Children of Kinshasa,
Benilubero Foundation**